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Works of the Best Authors

No. 437

HIDDEN LOVE

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

BY
FLOY PASCAL COWAN
AND
ROBERT THOMAS HARDY

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THOMAS HARDY

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HIDDEN LOVE

SCENE: *Dining-room of the DARROWS'. Prettily furnished, with bright-colored chintzes, potted flowers on window-sill at back, and magazines lying about. A woman's lovely cape and hat on sofa. Doors right and left. As curtain rises, Mr. and Mrs. GERALD DARROW are discovered sitting at either end of small table in center, sipping their after-dinner coffee. He is a serious, self-centered man, with quite a big idea of his own importance. She is pretty, playful, a little restive under his dominating masculine rule.*

GERALD. I think, my dear, that my reasons for objecting to your going with Minnie Dupont are very good ones.

ELSIE. (*Lightly*) My reasons for liking her are also very good ones. She amuses me.

GERALD. Well, I rather think it is more important for me to be satisfied with the impression my wife makes upon the public than for you to be amused.

ELSIE. (*A little mockingly*) Oh, dear! I think it quite important for me to be amused. (*After a moment*) And, anyway, I flattered myself that the impression I made upon the public was—er—quite good.

GERALD. I believe I'm the best judge of what is proper and not proper for my wife to do.

ELSIE. Gracious, Gerald! I'm something else besides your wife, am I not?

GERALD. (*Looking at her, surprised*) That is a sufficient definition for a good woman. Wife!

ELSIE. (*Laughing*) You know, Gerry, you ought to have been born centuries earlier. You'd have been a wonderful husband in the caveman period.

GERALD. (*Smiling faintly, rather pleased than otherwise at the thrust*) Every household has to have a head.

ELSIE. And it just has to be the man, doesn't it, dear?

GERALD. (*With utmost seriousness*) Naturally. (*She makes a little amused grimace and gesture, as if to say, "Can you beat that?" They sip their coffee in silence a moment.*)

GERALD. (*Speaking profoundly*) The public is very ready to draw conclusions. If you are seen going about with Minnie Dupont, it will think you are the same type of woman.

ELSIE. Maybe I am.

GERALD. (*Frowning*) I wish you wouldn't say things like that!

ELSIE. (*Looking across at him with good-natured tolerance that is beginning to wear thin and show exasperation*) Well—to get through with Minnie—just what is your objection to her?

GERALD. She's a demoralizing companion. Thinks of nothing but dancing, and men, and sport. She's entirely too flashy! Always running round with some questionable man—carrying on a violent flirtation——

ELSIE. If I mistake not, she used to run round with *you*, Gerald.

GERALD. Oh, that was in my before-marriage

days, my dear. A man does a lot of foolish things in his callow youth.

ELSIE. And now that I think of it, it was you who introduced her to me.

GERALD. That was before I knew I was going to marry you.

ELSIE. Oh! You'd have been more careful of the piece of goods if you'd known you were going to make a wife out of it!

GERALD. (*Not seeing at all that she is poking fun at him*) Naturally. But I had no notion then how things were going to turn out.

ELSIE. What? No premonition of your doom? I had. I knew immediately that you were going to marry me. (*Laughing.*) My funny old Gerry!

GERALD. (*Lighting a cigarette*) Another thing! Minnie's always going about with a dog on the string or in her arms.

ELSIE. Just now it was a man! (*She looks at him mischievously, but he is evidently pondering something.*) I've begged and begged. You never would let me have one. 'Twould be such company for me when you are away. (*He looks at her quickly, and she laughs merrily.*) A dog, I mean, Gerry.

GERALD. I thought we had disposed of that matter, Elsie. I don't want the peace of home broken up by some little yelping beast—who'd always be in your lap—always barking when we want to sleep. And you'd be cuddling him—talking baby talk to him. Ugh! They are nuisances! And I can't see why you want one.

ELSIE. If you wanted an elephant or a kangaroo, you'd have him, no matter how I objected to having him in the parlor. (*With a little flash of her eyes, as if from smoldering anger*) The peace of your home will be broken by something more serious

than a dog if you don't stop being so dictatorial, Gerry.

GERALD. I'm not in the least dictatorial. There are certain things, however, that I mean to be the judge of. (*Pause. She toys with her cup with a pretty insolence of manner, as if to accentuate her ignoring of his remark.*) For instance, I think I have a right to insist that in future we have no repetition of your conduct at the Bellamys' dance.

ELSIE. (*Dumfounded*) What, pray, are you talking about? You weren't even there.

GERALD. You had some nincompoop dangling about you all the evening. I heard about it.

ELSIE. Ah! So this is what you were driving at. All this talk about Minnie was just——

GERALD. I'll bet you met him through her. He's just the kind she'd have running about with her. Curly-headed lounge lizard!

ELSIE. (*Angrily*) Gerald! Be careful! I'm just about getting tired of your tyranny. As for Jack Barryford—you've never seen him, have you? He's a stranger here. What right have you to call a delightful friend of mine a lounge lizard?

GERALD. I know the type. (*Coming down on the table with his fist.*) I know you are not going to have him dangling about you again! (*ELSIE gets up and wanders about the room.*)

ELSIE. You are acting ridiculously, Gerry. I dance a few times with a man who happens to be attractive and handsome, and you rise to tragic heights as a jealous husband. (*Shrugs her shoulders.*) It would be amusing if——

GERALD. (*Coming up to her*) If what?

ELSIE. If you hadn't rather overdone this authoritative attitude of yours, for some time. I'm getting a little fed up on it.

GERALD. I mean to be master in my own house.

But I have no desire to be disagreeable about it. It was you who flared up. (ELSIE *laughs and turns away, sitting down on sofa and turning over pages of a magazine aimlessly.*)

ELSIE. You have no desire to be disagreeable, Gerry, so long as I am a marionette—who moves and dances just as you pull the strings.

GERALD. You're talking rubbish, and you know it. (He looks at watch. Is evidently surprised at the time. Hesitates a moment, then comes over to back of sofa and leans his arms on it, looking down at his wife and smiling. His smile is charming, and makes one see that he can be most lovable—when he forgets to take himself so seriously.) I'm sure you don't enjoy even a little bit of a quarrel, Elsie.

ELSIE. (Enigmatically, looking ahead) Oh, no! I'm a very amiable creature, Gerald.

GERALD. Well, I'm feeling very amiable, too——

ELSIE. (Looking back over her shoulder at him) Do you know why you are feeling amiable just now, Gerry?

GERALD. Not exactly. (Again smiling) Maybe it's just my naturally sweet disposition shining forth.

ELSIE. I've noticed you are always particularly amiable after delivering a lecture to me. It's because you feel so very sure that the lecture has done me good—that your will has conquered. It gives you a kind of—glow.

GERALD. Oh, come!

ELSIE. But you're wrong. It hasn't done me the least bit of good. (She turns back to her magazine. GERALD'S complacent face shows that he is mildly amused at her pretensions of waywardness. He is very confident of the potency of his authority.)

GERALD. Got an old board meeting on to-night. Big bore. (She makes no move toward bidding him

good-by, so he bends over and gives her a rather perfunctory kiss on the cheek—the kind of marital kiss that has become a habit. He turns and looks about for his hat. Goes toward door on right.) Well, good-by.

ELSIE. *(Her back is toward him and she keeps her head bowed over magazine, but her eyes lift, and there is a look of pleasant expectation, eagerness, in them.) Good-by. (GERALD exits. The moment he is gone she gets up and runs gaily to closet door. But the telephone, on the little table near it, rings, and she pauses to answer it.) Hello. . . . Yes. . . . Oh, hello, Minnie! Yes, he came, all right! But—(Laughing)—so did Gerald. He got home sooner than I expected. . . . Uh huh. And I just did have time to push Jackie into the closet and close the door! My dear, it was thrilling! (GERALD has come back into the room, evidently having forgotten something. He stops dumfounded on hearing her words. His face undergoes many transformations.) Yes, and all the time Gerry was right here! Call it funny if you like. . . . Well—you don't know Gerry as well as I do! . . . I hope not!—(Laughing.) I was just rushing to let him out. I don't know what I'm going to do. The future will just have to take care of itself. Anyhow, Gerry will be away all evening, so we'll have that much time together, anyway. . . . Yes, he's simply adorable! I love him to death! (A cunning look takes the place of the rage on GERALD's face. He slips out of door.) To-morrow? Jackie and I—both? (Laughs.) All right. We'll be there. (She hangs up receiver and is again at closet door when GERALD re-enters. His face is perfectly composed. She is a little confused, but turns away casually from closet door, and stands before a wall*

mirror, pulling at a curl over her brow.) Forget something?

GERALD. Yes. Some papers I need. I think I left them in there—(*Points to closet door and starts toward it, covertly watching her.*)

ELSIE. (*Quickly, trying to hide agitation*) I'll get them for you.

GERALD. Why should you, pray? You don't know what they are, or where they are.

ELSIE. (*In sweet, cajoling way, her finger on his coat button*) Guess you could tell me, couldn't you? I'm just pining to be of use to a rising young husband!

GERALD. I've forgotten where I put them. I will have to look. (*Starts past her, but with his eyes watching her narrowly.*)

ELSIE. (*Using all her little arts. Playfully looking up at him, and proceeding from one button to another.*) On the lower shelf? Middle shelf? Or upper shelf?

GERALD. (*Entirely unmoved by her kittenish ways*) I'm in a hurry. I'll look myself.

ELSIE. Oh, I forgot! I cleaned that closet myself—just—just yesterday. There weren't any papers at all in there. They must be in the bedroom.

GERALD. (*Pushing past her*) Think I'll look, anyway.

(*She manages to get between him and the closet door.*)

GERALD. Why don't you want me to look in there?

ELSIE. How absurd! I was just wanting to help you.

GERALD. You don't have to tell me the truth! I know! (*He takes her by the arm and whirls her*

aside. She clings to his arm.) Hypocrite! You think you can deceive me?

ELSIE. Deceive you? Gerald!

GERALD. (*Sneering*) That's right! Play the innocent! (*His fury getting the better of him.*) I know what you have been up to! You've got your "Jackie" in there, have you! Well, I'll take a look at him!

ELSIE. No, no! Listen, Gerald! I didn't mean to deceive you——

GERALD. Didn't mean—— You——

ELSIE. But I love him! I can't give him up!

GERALD. You dare tell me that! (*He takes her arm and rudely wrenches it loose from him.*)

ELSIE. Oh—you hurt me! I didn't think you could be cruel.

GERALD. (*Trying the door and finding it locked*) Give me the key!

ELSIE. No—no!

GERALD. Then, I'll break the door down! (*Picks up chair and raises it above head, preparing to strike door.*)

ELSIE. No, no! He—he might attack you! He's—dangerous!

GERALD. (*Hurling the chair aside*) Oh, he is, is he? (*Turns to little table drawer, and grabs revolver and levels it at door.*) Give me that key or I'll shoot through it.

ELSIE. You coward!

GERALD. Give me the key!

ELSIE. (*Handing him the key*) Oh! (*She sits down, putting her hands over her face.*)

GERALD. (*Unlocking the door and flinging it open*) Come out, you dog! (*A little white poodle comes toddling out, blinking. GERALD thrusts it aside with his foot and dashes into closet. Comes out. In thundering voice*) Where is your Jackie?

ELSIE. (*Looking up, surprised, her eyes falling upon the little dog, which she has taken up*) This is Jackie.

GERALD. (*Looking from the pistol in his hand to the infinitesimal dog*) This! This! Is this what you were carrying on about? (*He stands rather stupidly gazing at the dog, unable to recover at once from his towering rage.*)

ELSIE. What did you think? (*Suddenly the truth flashes upon her. Her whole expression changes, but she speaks very quietly, almost as if stunned.*) Gerald! You thought—I had a—lover in there!

GERALD. (*Characteristically absorbed in his own emotion, with a vague notion that he has been made absurd and must maintain his dignity and authority.*) Who could think you'd be carrying on so foolishly about a dog! Anyway, I told you you couldn't have a dog! Served you right if I had killed the little beast. (*But he turns a little sheepishly and puts the pistol away.*)

(ELSIE, with the little dog in her arms, stands up, looking straight ahead with a tragic look in her eyes, as if hurt almost too deeply for words.)

ELSIE. All I wanted was a little pet—to play with. And you—accuse me of—infidelity. (*After a pause.*) You were able to think that of me!

GERALD. (*Looking at her for the first time*) Well, good heavens, Elsie! What you said over the phone sounded like——

ELSIE. (*Her smouldering anger bursting into flame*) And you spy upon me! Listening to what I say to others——

GERALD. I didn't mean to overhear, Elsie. Forgive me. A man is a damn' fool when he's jealous. I admit——

ELSIE. (*Passionately*) You admit—too late! I've had enough!

GERALD. (*Coming up to her and showing alarm and agitation*) What on earth do you mean, Elsie?

ELSIE. This is the last straw! I thought I was marrying a husband. You have been a tyrant! (*As he protests.*) Oh, you were too complacent, too absorbed in yourself, to see! But it's true! Because you'd been successful out in the world, you lorded it over me as if I belonged to you—body and soul. I don't belong to anybody but myself! (*She turns a little blindly, reaching for her coat and hat on sofa. He follows her, now thoroughly alarmed.*)

GERALD. Forgive me, Elsie! You know that I love you!

ELSIE. You've loved yourself!

GERALD. (*Appalled at her words*) Good God!

ELSIE. And now—a few overheard words—and you are ready to believe the greatest evil of me! (*She moves toward the door.*) I never want to see you again! Never!

GERALD. (*Coming to her with outstretched arms*) Oh, Elsie, you can't mean it! You can't! Give me a chance to show you——

ELSIE. I'm going—I'm going——

(*She goes out. He follows her to the door, calling her name beseechingly. She does not respond, and presently he comes back into the room, where he stands drawing his hand over his brow, utterly bewildered by the suddenness of the blow. He looks about in a dazed, stricken sort of way, then sinks down in chair by table with gesture as if all were lost. Picks up her little handkerchief lying on table, looks at it, kisses it. Bows his head on table in despair. There is silence for a moment. Then, presently,*

the little white dog wanders back into room and up to GERALD, licking the hand that hangs limply at his side. GERALD looks up, starts to thrust the dog away, then thinks better of it.)

GERALD. (*Sadly*) It's not your fault, old chap. I guess I deserved it. (*He picks the dog up and holds it in his arms, caressing it.*)

(*ELSIE reappears at the door, looks about the room quickly, as if for the dog. At sight of GERRY sitting so forlornly, her face softens. She comes quietly into room. Her face shows that she has relented.*)

ELSIE. May—may—we both stay, Gerald?

GERALD. (*Springing up with joy and going to her, his hands outstretched, the little dog dangling in one.*) My darling girl! (*He catches her in his arms. Kisses her rapturously. The dog comes to a rest between them. As curtain falls, GERALD is poking his finger at doggie and talking baby-talk in most approved fashion—thoroughly humbled:*)

GERALD. Little sweet-um pup-um!

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A comedy in 3 acts, by F. Tennison Jesse and H. Harwood. 4 males, 5 females. One easy interior scene. A charming comedy, constructed with uncommon skill, and abounds with clever lines. Margaret Anglin's big success. Amateurs will find this comedy easy to produce and popular with all audiences. Price, 60 Cents.

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Is it possible to tell the absolute truth—even for twenty-four hours? It is—at least Bob Bennett, the hero of "Nothing But the Truth," accomplished the feat. The bet he made with his business partners, and the trouble he got into—with his partners, his friends, and his fiancée—this is the subject of William Collier's tremendous comedy hit. "Nothing But the Truth" can be whole-heartedly recommended as one of the most sprightly, amusing and popular comedies that this country can boast. Price, 60 Cents.

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A comedy in 4 acts, by Minnie Z. Jaffa. 10 males, 2 females (although any number of males and females may be used as clerks, etc.). Two interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours. The thing into which Jimmy walked was a broken-down shoe factory, when the clerks had all been fired, and when the proprietor was in serious contemplation of suicide.

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Clean, wholesome comedy with just a touch of human nature, just a dash of excitement and more than a little bit of true philosophy make "In Walked Jimmy" one of the most delightful of plays. Jimmy is full of the religion of life, the religion of happiness and the religion of helpfulness, and he so permeates the atmosphere with his "religion" that everyone is happy. The spirit of optimism, good cheer, and hearty laughter dominates the play. There is not a dull moment in any of the four acts. We strongly recommend it.

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MARTHA BY-THE-DAY.

An optimistic comedy in three acts, by Julie M. Lippmann, author of the "Martha" stories. 5 males, 5 females. Three interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

It is altogether a gentle thing, this play. It is full of quaint humor, old-fashioned, homely sentiment, the kind that people who see the play will recall and chuckle over to-morrow and the next day.

Miss Lippmann has herself adapted her very successful book for stage service, and in doing this has selected from her novel the most telling incidents, infectious comedy and homely sentiment for the play, and the result is thoroughly delightful. Price, 60 Cents.

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A brand new comedy in four acts, by Marie Doran, author of "The New Co-Ed," "Tempest and Sunshine," and many other successful plays. 4 males, 7 females. The scenes are extremely easy to arrange; two plain interiors and one exterior, a garden, or, if necessary, the two interiors will answer. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

The story is about vocational training, a subject now widely discussed; also, the distribution of large wealth.

Back of the comedy situation and snappy dialogue there is good logic and a sound moral in this pretty play, which is worthy the attention of the experienced amateur. It is a clean, wholesome play, particularly suited to high school production. Price, 30 Cents.

MISS SOMEBODY ELSE.

A modern play in four acts by Marion Short, author of "The Touchdown," etc. 6 males, 10 females. Two interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

This delightful comedy has gripping dramatic moments, unusual character types, a striking and original plot and is essentially modern in theme and treatment. The story concerns the adventures of Constance Darcy, a multi-millionaire's young daughter. Constance embarks on a trip to find a young man who had been in her father's employ and had stolen a large sum of money. She almost succeeds, when suddenly all traces of the young man are lost. At this point she meets some old friends who are living in almost want and, in order to assist them through motives benevolent, she determines to sink her own aristocratic personality in that of a refined but humble little Irish waitress with the family that are in want. She not only carries her scheme to success in assisting the family, but finds romance and much tense and lively adventure during the period of her incognito, aside from capturing the young man who had defrauded her father. The story is full of bright comedy lines and dramatic situations and is highly recommended for amateur production. This is one of the best comedies we have ever offered with a large number of female characters. The dialogue is bright and the play is full of action from start to finish; not a dull moment in it. This is a great comedy for high schools and colleges, and the wholesome story will please the parents and teachers. We strongly recommend it.

Price, 30 Cents.

PURPLE AND FINE LINEN.

An exceptionally pretty comedy of Puritan New England, in three acts, by Amita B. Fairgrieve and Helena Miller. 9 male, 5 female characters.

This is the Lend A Hand Smith College prize play. It is an admirable play for amateurs, is rich in character portrayal of varied types and is not too difficult while thoroughly pleasing.

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The Touch-Down

A comedy in four acts, by Marion Short. 8 males, 6 females, but any number of characters can be introduced in the ensembles. Costumes modern. One interior scene throughout the play. Time, 2½ hours.

This play, written for the use of clever amateurs, is the story of life in Siddell, a Pennsylvania co-educational college. It deals with the vicissitudes and final triumph of the Siddell Football Eleven, and the humorous and dramatic incidents connected therewith.

"The Touch-Down" has the true varsity atmosphere, college songs are sung, and the piece is lively and entertaining throughout. High schools will make no mistake in producing this play. We strongly recommend it as a high-class and well-written comedy.

Price, 30 Cents.

Hurry, Hurry, Hurry

A comedy in three acts, by LeRoy Arnold. 5 males, 4 females. One interior scene. Costumes modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

The story is based on the will of an eccentric aunt. It stipulates that her pretty niece must be affianced before she is twenty-one, and married to her fiancé within a year, if she is to get her spinster relative's million. Father has nice notions of honor and fails to tell daughter about the will, so that she may make her choice untrammelled by any other consideration than that of true love. The action all takes place in the evening the midnight of which will see her reach twenty-one. Time is therefore short, and it is hurry, hurry, hurry, if she is to become engaged and thus save her father from impending bankruptcy.

The situations are intrinsically funny and the dialogue is sprightly. The characters are natural and unaffected and the action moves with a snap such as should be expected from its title.

Price, 30 Cents.

The Varsity Coach

A three-act play of college life, by Marion Short, specially adapted to performance by amateurs or high school students. 5 males 6 females, but any number of boys and girls may be introduced in the action of the play. Two settings necessary, a college boy's room and the university campus. Time, about 2 hours.

Like many another college boy, "Bob" Selby, an all-round popular college man, becomes possessed of the idea that athletic prowess is more to be desired than scholarship. He is surprised in the midst of a "spread" in his room in Regatta week by a visit from his aunt who is putting him through college. Aunt Serena, "a lady of the old school and the dearest little woman in the whole world," has hastened to make this visit to her adored nephew under the mistaken impression that he is about to receive the Fellowes prize for scholarship. Her grief and chagrin when she learns that instead of the prize Robert has received "a pink card," which is equivalent to suspension for poor scholarship, gives a touch of pathos to an otherwise jolly comedy of college life. How the repentant Robert more than redeems himself, carries off honors at the last, and in the end wins Ruth, the faithful little sweetheart of the "Prom" and the classroom, makes a story of dramatic interest and brings out very clearly certain phases of modern college life. There are several opportunities for the introduction of college songs and "stunts."

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The Return of Hi Jinks

A comedy in four acts, by Marion Short, author of "The Varsity Coach," "The Touch-Down," etc. 6 males, 8 females. Costumes modern. One interior scene.

This comedy is founded upon and elaborated from a farce comedy in two acts written by J. H. Horta, and originally produced at Tuft's College.

Hiram Poynter Jinks, a Junior in Hoosic College (Willie Collier type), and a young moving picture actress (Mary Pickford type), are the leading characters in this lively, modern farce.

Thomas Hodge, a Senior, envious of the popularity of Jinks, wishes to think up a scheme to throw ridicule upon him during a visit of the Hoosic Glee Club to Jinks's home town. Jinks has obligingly acted as a one-day substitute in a moving picture play, in which there is a fire scene, and this gives Hodge his cue. He sends what seems to be a bona fide account of Jink's heroism at a Hoosic fire to Jink's home paper. Instead of repudiating his laurels as expected, Jinks decides to take a flyer in fame, confirms the fake story, confesses to being a hero and is adored by all the girls, to the chagrin and discomfort of Hodge. Of course, the truth comes out at last, but Jinks is not hurt thereby, and his romance with Mimi Mayflower comes to a successful termination.

This is a great comedy for amateurs. It is full of funny situations and is sure to please. Price, 30 Cents.

June

A most successful comedy-drama in four acts, by Marie Doran, author of "The New Co-Ed," "Tempest and Sunshine," "Dorothy's Neighbors," etc. 4 males, 8 females. One interior scene. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

This play has a very interesting group of young people. June is an appealing little figure, an orphan living with her aunt. There are a number of delightful, life-like characters: the sorely tried likeable Mrs. Hopkins, the amusing, haughty Miss Banks of the glove department, the lively Tilly and Milly, who work in the store, and ambitious Snoozer; Mrs. Hopkins's only son, who aspires to be President of the United States, but finds his real sphere is running the local trolley car. The play is simplicity itself in the telling of an every-day story, and the scenic requirements call for only one set, a room in the boarding house of Mrs. Hopkins, while an opportunity is afforded to introduce any number of extra characters. Musical numbers may be introduced, if desired. Price, 30 Cents.

Tempest and Sunshine

A comedy drama in four acts, by Marie Doran. 5 males and 3 females. One exterior and three interior scenes. Plays about 2 hours.

Every school girl has revelled in the sweet simplicity and gentleness of the characters interwoven in the charms that Mary J. Holmes commands in her story of "Tempest and Sunshine." We can strongly recommend this play as one of the best plays for high school production published in recent years. Price, 30 Cents.

(The Above Are Subject to Royalty When Produced)

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